SOCIAL POLICY FOR THE FUTURE

PHILOSOPHY, PRINCIPLES, AND DIRECTIONS
FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
IN PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

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MAY 1985

I am pleased to present the Government of Prince Edward Island's Social Policy for the Future - Philosophy, Principles and Directions for Social Development on Prince Edward Island.

The social fabric of Prince Edward Island is unique and reflected in our special way of life. Government recognizes the importance of that way of life.

This policy offers a direction for the Province to follow in meeting both the social and economic needs of our citizens. It offers challenges to Government and all Islanders. Effective social policy requires public participation.

Our concern is with the future and the social needs that must be addressed as we continue to grow and develop in a changing world.

I hope that by working together we will build a better world for our children and a brighter future for our world.

James M. Lee, P.C.
Premier
Province of
Prince Edward Island

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to provide the people of Prince Edward Island with a statement of the social policy of the Government of this Province. The paper outlines a plan of action that the Government will use immediately, and build on in future years to ensure that the policy is reflected in all those areas of government activity to which it is relevant.

Public policy is the result of the relationship between government philosophy and the economic and social environment. Therefore, this paper also defines the social policy areas, states government philosophy and priorities in these areas, and describes the major economic and social issues which will affect the development of social policy in the future.

With this comprehensive and integrated statement of social policy, government brings together policies related to the provision of government services in the areas of Health, Social Services,

Community and Cultural Affairs, Education, and Justice, relates them to the overall priorities of the Government, and takes steps to better integrate and co-ordinate these areas of policy. There are a number of reasons why this is a timely and important undertaking.

Government's primary management objective is to provide the best possible range and quality of service to the public at a fair and acceptable cost. The rapid expansion in government services during the last several years has caused the range of government services and the interrelationships among them to become increasingly complex. During recent years, public funds necessary to sustain services and programs have become much more limited than they were during the time that the major expansion in services took place.

Because of increasing costs and growing demand, it becomes even more important to focus management on the cost effectiveness of services as well as on efficiency and productivity. It is essential that services be well co-ordinated and that government departments and agencies have clearly defined responsibilities. A clear statement of policy is an important step toward providing that direction.

Social policy cannot be formulated independent of the overall economic environment. In other words, social policy and economic development planning must be consistent and mutually supportive. The integrated policy is intended to provide general guidelines to government agencies on how to structure programs to address issues which have both social and economic implications.

In the past few years, government has initiated a number of new programs - many of them on a pilot basis, has restructured management, and has stated a number of policy imperatives. Government has had an opportunity to assess many of these initiatives, and to determine whether or not they should become a more prominent or permanent part of public policy. Studies, reports and commissions have informed the government of Islanders' attitudes toward various aspects of their quality of life, on the structure of their education system and the curriculum used in the schools, on municipal funding and cultural policy, and on many parts of the social services and health areas, ranging from childcare to care for the aging. This statement of policy provides an opportunity for the government to formally recognize and incorporate into policy a number of the valuable insights and initiatives which have come out of the participatory process.

1.2 Government Social Policy and the Human Services

Those areas of government policy and programming which are usually regarded as "social" rather than "economic" include health and hospital services, social assistance programs, education at all levels, the justice system and a number of community and cultural services ranging from housing to support for the arts. These areas are often called "human services", in order to distinguish them from the narrower range of services which are usually implied by the term "social services"; in this paper, social policy will mean policy that is applied in the human service areas.

Human services are the areas of government programming which directly affect the individual in society -- that is to say, the services and resources are provided directly to individuals, or groups of individuals, rather than to businesses, corporate entities or investment programs. They are distinguished by their availability to anyone who may need them and by their purpose, which reflects society's desire to have all individuals live in as humane, dignified and independent a manner as is possible.

Government social policy is the link between the philosophy of the government and the actions of those government agencies responsible for the delivery of human services.

For example, it is the philosophy of this government that every Islander should be as self-reliant as he or she is capable of being. That philosophy, expressed as a policy on the provision of services to the elderly, says that individuals should continue to play an active and constructive role in their communities, living as independently as possible in their senior years. The Community Based Services to the Elderly Program is a result of that policy.

1.3 Government Policy Imperatives

The translation of government philosophy into policies and programs requires that there be shared values and goals among participants in the process. These values and goals become the fundamental themes which guide all government activities. They must

be general enough that they have some meaning for all areas of service, and yet specific enough that those who are responsible for the delivery of services can actually apply them.

During the past three years Government has re-emphasized fundamental themes which have guided, and will continue to guide, policy and program development in Prince Edward Island They are: the dignity and pride which comes with individual self-reliance, the essential role of the family in a balanced and healthy society, and the predominance of communities in the social and economic lives of Prince Edward Islanders.

1.3.1. Self-Reliance

In the 1984 Throne Speech the Government outlined a threefold approach to the provision of social services and the development of social policy. The first, and of course fundamental approach, is "to continue to provide adequate levels of services for those who truly need them". The other two dimensions of this approach are directly related to the goal and values of individual self-reliance, namely; "to re-define our social policy goals to reduce dependency, encourage a spirit of self-reliance and strengthen our social institutions to improve the quality of our lives within caring and compassionate communities", and "to reshape existing social programs to give them a new emphasis on client responsibility, employment opportunities and the avoidance of dependency." Self-reliance is important as an indicator of well-being; it is a measure of the extent to which individuals are able to use their skills and ingenuity to make productive use of available resources.

The value of self-reliance originated with the strong spirit of independence in Prince Edward Island communities where self-reliance meant that most families in the community produced at least as much as they needed to consume, and that the community "looked after its own". Social and economic change has caused the meaning of self-reliance to evolve. In the workplace, more people are producing services than are producing food. Urbanization has changed the structure of communities, and government is very much involved in providing support to individuals and families who require it. However, changes in the structure of communities, families, and the workplace, do not necessarily represent changes in the fundamental values of society, and Islanders have always placed a high value on being self-reliant.

In today's society, self-reliance means that individuals are able to use their abilities and resources to best advantage to contribute to their own welfare, and that of their community. The role of government in supporting the spirit of self-reliance is threefold. Government must assure that all members of society have an equal opportunity to be self-reliant through equal access to education, employment and promotion, and community and government services and activities. Government must help to encourage new business opportunities and to strengthen the economy so that Islanders can make the most productive use of the resources available to them. Government must ensure that the social programs which touch the lives of virtually every member of the community all have as their ultimate goal individual self-reliance and the dignity and pride which that brings.

1.3.2. The Family

The family is our society's basic training ground. When working effectively, families can provide a natural support system wherein each member can learn through taking risks without fear of rejection, and through developing the ability to balance individual rights with mutual responsibilities. Families can provide opportunities for members to achieve their full potential. The family shapes our values. It is our link to the past and our hope for the future.

In spite of the many difficulties experienced in and by so many families in these stressful times, people do still have a strong natural desire to form family units. They want the satisfaction which can result from some type of family relationship.

This Government recognizes the family as a crucial influence in individual and societal well-being, and values the family as the basic social foundation of our Island community.

It is neither possible, nor perhaps healthy, to eliminate all of the external influences and pressures which can threaten the family. Instead we can try to formulate social policies which support the family, build close relationships, and which strengthen families' ability to weather the effects of damaging forces and to adapt to progress and development.

1.3.3. The Community

Virtually all individuals, in their social and working lives, relate to a community. Communities are formed as a result of a natural instinct on the part of individuals to associate with and to draw strength from their neighbours. The community provides individuals with a direct opportunity to affect the quality of their lives by contributing to the development of important institutions such as the school, the church and local government, and to their local economy. The opportunity for individuals to enhance their quality of life is closely related to the future growth and development of their communities.

The community holds a unique place in the history of Prince Edward Island. However, community life has changed dramatically in the last twenty years. Rural communities, once defined by a one-room school, a small church and a store, are now more frequently defined by consolidated schools and churches, facilities for special interest groups such as service and recreational organizations, and, to some extent, regional centres for the delivery of government services. In the more urban centres of the Province, the range of services available had dramatically increased. Patterns of association have changed to the point that, at any one time, an individual may relate to a number of communities. Throughout this period of change, community ties have continued to play an important part in the social and economic lives of Prince Edward Islanders.

The stability and development of a community is primarily a result of the choices which individuals make about where they wish to live and work, however it is important that government actions complement rather than frustrate the choices individuals make.

In identifying community strengthening as a priority, the Provincial Government recognizes that government must be responsive to the cultural and social dimension of community life as well as to the economic dimension. While a community cannot survive without a solid economic base, it is the social and cultural aspects of community life which define the community and provide the individuals living in it with a sense of identity and of participation in their society. Since almost any activity of government could potentially affect the social environment in a community, government must ensure that it not only encourages communities in their social and cultural activities, but also that communities are involved, insofar as is possible, in the process of making decisions which may affect their future.

1.4. Human Service Programs

This section outlines the range, number, and cost of human service programs in Prince Edward Island.

- Education
  - Elementary
  - Secondary
  - Post Secondary
  - Vocational
  - Nursing Education
  - Libraries

- Health
  - Cancer Control
  - Community Hygiene
  - Dental Health
  - Mental Health
  - Immunization
  - Maternal Health
  - School Health
  - Pre-school Appraisals
  - Home Nursing Care
  - Diabetes Control
  - Tuberculosis Control
  - Pharmacy Services
  - Medical Insurance
  - Addiction Services
  - Vital Statistics

- Hospitals
  - Hospital Administration
  - Hospital Insurance

- Social Services
  - General Welfare Assistance
  - Child Protection
  - Child Welfare
  - Rehabilitation
  - Speech Therapy
  - Nutrition Services
  - Audiology
  - Early Childhood Development/ Day Care Services
  - Services to the Mentally Retarded

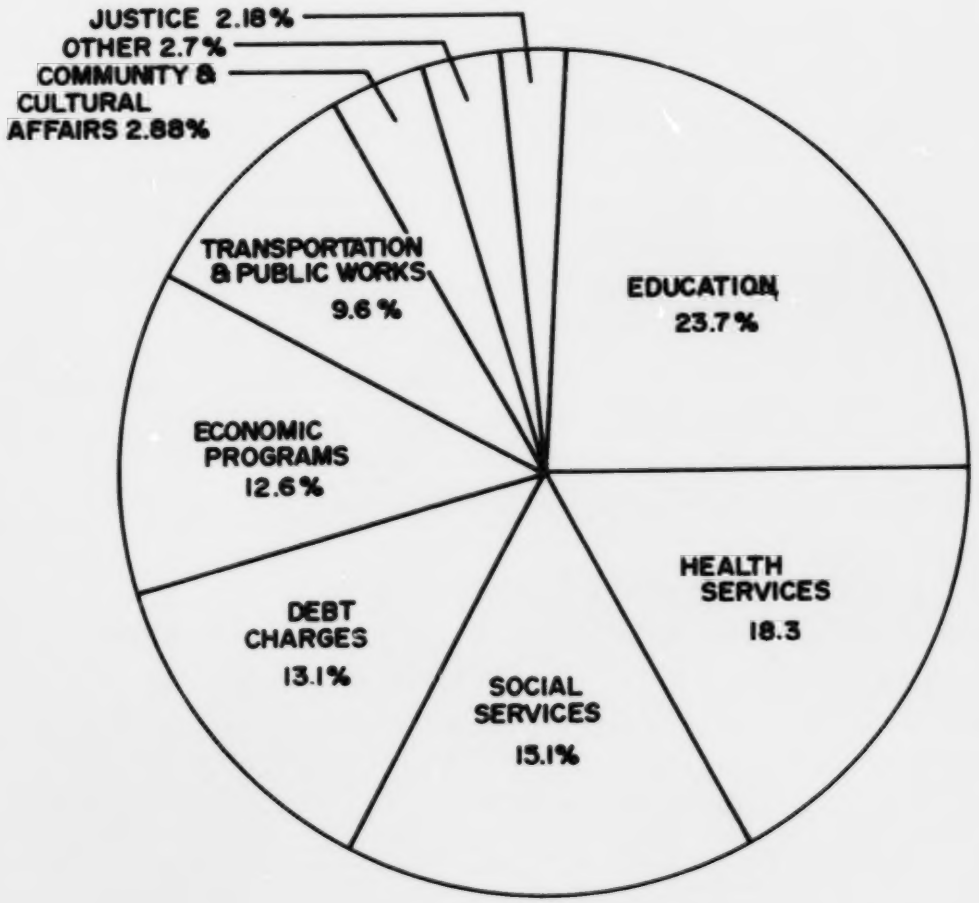
Social Services (cont'd)	-	Home/Community/Institutionally-based services to the elderly
	-	Funding to community social service agencies
- Justice	-	Correctional Services
	-	Probation Services
	-	Consumer Services
	-	Corporations Regulation
	-	Insurance Regulation
	-	Supreme Court
	-	Provincial Court
	-	Family Court
	-	Policing and Law Enforcement
	-	Legal Aid
- Community Affairs	-	Municipal Relations
	-	Municipal Grants
	-	Housing
	-	Community Planning
	-	Recreation
	-	Sport and Fitness
	-	Allied Youth
	-	Peer Education
- Cultural Affairs	-	Arts, Heritage, and Cultural Promotion and Support

Nearly two-thirds of Government's annual expenditures are devoted to the maintenance of this broad and complex range of administrative, financial, and legislative activities. This is equivalent to the proportion of human services spending across the country, and reflects both the magnitude and significance of human services in contemporary society.

Figure 1.

DISTRIBUTION OF EXPENDITURES

1983-1984



1.5 Program Management

The history of policy development in Prince Edward Island in the late 1960's had the effect of narrowing the definition of "government policy" to the point where a statement from government, in order to qualify as a "policy statement" nearly always had to promise a new or expanded program. This understanding of policy was formed during a time of rapid growth in government services, an unprecedented increase in the size of the public sector, and an availability of public funds limited only by the imaginations of those responsible for finding ways to spend them.

The result is a range and number of programs which, if properly managed, should be capable of adjusting to a broad array of future needs. The key however is management.

During the past three years the Government of Prince Edward Island, like most other provincial governments, has been faced with a financial situation which has required restraint both in the development of new programs and in spending on existing programs. Of necessity, therefore, the emphasis in administration has been on maintaining existing levels of service through careful management, and ensuring that the Government policies and priorities are carried out, wherever possible, through modification to existing programs.

The experience of the past three years has clearly demonstrated that many new initiatives can be carried out and a number of existing services improved by adapting within existing programs and managing well.

2. FACTORS AFFECTING SOCIAL POLICY

2.1 Overview

The severe setback to economic growth in the late 1970's and early 1980's has given all provincial governments a new perspective on the demand for, and provision of, human services. The effect of economic recession has been increased demand for services. The effect on families and individuals, of unemployment and uncertainty about the economic future has been felt throughout the health, social welfare and justice systems. Some services have been used in ways which were never intended -- for example unemployment insurance, welfare assistance, or even educational programs have become, for some, substitutes for employment.

To establish and maintain a solid economy, and to stimulate growth, government must invest and provide some leadership in the area of economic development.

Social development is also a traditional and crucial area of Government investment. Because Government funding will always be limited, the human services and the economic side of Government programming often present competing priorities. However economic policy cannot be formulated without regard for the overall social environment, and social policy cannot be inconsistent with, and must enhance the pursuit of flexibility and adjustment within all sectors of the economy. The challenge for government is to find a proper

balance. Human services touch virtually every individual in the community, and all have a right to an adequate level of service whether it be in health care, educational opportunities, justice, social assistance, or community and culture when needed. However, the prospect for adequate social programs in the long-term, depends on a strong economy,

Of those factors currently affecting social policy, unemployment is probably the most crucial. And unemployment has long-term consequences. The impact of unemployment upon youth will show a cost to the community much greater than unemployment figures indicate. Homelessness, crime and drug abuse are immediate effects. Unemployment will also face women displaced by technology or loss of labour intensive industries primarily employing women. Long-term costs include detrimental effects on career development, pension coverage and child rearing. The effects of long-term unemployment will also likely be felt dramatically by older workers who may fall victim to occupational obsolescence, and the general disadvantage of older workers in the market. The potential impact of this phenomenon upon social security costs is evident.

In Prince Edward Island, demographic factors, and particularly the impact of the age structure of the population, affect the environment for social policy. The right of the aged and aging to live productive, active and fulfilling lives means new challenges in areas such as housing, transportation and health care.

Housing is an important consideration in government policy, both social and economic. Government has a responsibility to ensure insofar as is possible that adequate and affordable shelter is available to low income groups in all areas of the Province. As well, government housing policy affects the construction industry and community development. As the type and extent of Federal involvement in housing changes, Prince Edward Island, along with all other Provinces, will have to adjust its responses to pressing housing issues.

The education system has undergone dramatic changes during the last two decades, many of which have greatly improved the system. However it is still necessary to ensure that the school system retain traditional ties to Island communities and that appropriate community values and attitudes are reinforced in the education of young people in Prince Edward Island. At the same time care must be taken not to perpetuate traditional biases.

The justice system will be challenged in the coming years to deal with new federal legislation such as the Young Offenders Act and the new Canadian Charter of Rights. There are also important issues related to consumerism, law reform, uniformity across jurisdictions, and the role of appointed boards and commissions.

In the area of social services, a number of critical issues must be faced. These include the increasing demand for child welfare services, the increasing trend to deinstitutionalization of handicapped persons.

Many recent social developments will have effect far into the future. The increased participation of women in the labour force and management, higher levels of educational attainment, improved health into old age, insistence of disadvantaged groups upon fair treatment, and the evolution of certain hitherto "family" functions into service industries, undoubtedly all constitute long-term trends.

These changes, however, do not necessarily represent changes in the basic values of society, and it is important that policies recognize and protect these basic values while addressing the great number of economic and social changes and their effects on individuals.

2.2 Policy Considerations for the Future

2.2.1. Demographic Patterns

Consideration of demographic patterns and trends is one of the most basic elements of social policy formulation; if government social policy is to guide the management of social programs and services to benefit the population, this planning must begin with an analysis of historical and anticipated population patterns.

Prince Edward Island differs from the other Provinces in a number of respects. It is the smallest Province in both area and population, still, it is the most densely populated, with close to ten times as many people per square mile as the rest of Canada.

The geography of the Province, along with its extensive network of transportation routes and the decentralization of many services has made it possible for people to enjoy simultaneously the benefits of rural and urban living. Rural settlement in Prince Edward Island is more than double the national level, and has continued to increase, although growth has occurred in the "rural non-farm" category, while the "farm" population has declined.

Overall, population growth in Prince Edward Island has been slight and slow, amounting to only 53% of the national population growth rate between 1961 and 1981. This can be accounted for to some extent by a high level of emigration fuelled by the search for employment. The maturing of the post-war "baby boom" has tended to balance the effects of emigration with respect to population totals, but the age composition of the population has become skewed such that Prince Edward Island has proportionately more people age 15 years or younger and 65 years or older than the rest of Canada, and fewer people in the "prime working-age" categories of 25-44 and 45-64. This is particularly disturbing in view of the high level of educational attainment among people in these latter categories; emigrants from Prince Edward Island are often well educated, energetic young people who leave unwillingly because they cannot earn a living here.

Immigration from these same age groups has been minimal and sporadic, most often associated with employment in specific projects such as those funded under the Development Plan, the relocation of

D.V.A., or the establishment of the Atlantic Veterinary College. Employment opportunities for these types of people are quite restricted in Prince Edward Island, and they often move on after a few years' residency in this Province.

The declining birth rate in Prince Edward Island is consistent with patterns elsewhere in Canada, and may be related to a wide variety of social and economic conditions, such as family planning, financial pressures on families, higher levels of education for women and the accompanying desire to pursue a career, and changing attitudes of women toward their role in society. The full effects of lower birthrates will not be felt for a few more years but could contribute to a continuing increase in the average age of the Provincial population.

Even at present the proportion of older people (65+) in the population of this Province is higher than ever before and higher than in most other Provinces. Awareness of, and concern over, this situation was beginning to grow as long as 10 years ago, before "population aging" became a significant issue throughout North America. In Prince Edward Island, the number of citizens aged 65 years and over has increased both absolutely and proportionally at a steady rate of 300 to 400 or 0.2 to 0.3% annually since the mid-1970's.

These trends have obvious implications for social planning, and for programming, budgeting, and cost-sharing by governments at all levels.

2.2.2. The Aged and Aging

Aging is both a personal and a societal experience. Everyone has a high stake in ensuring that the quality of life in old age is considered as important as at any other age, for everyone is involved in and affected by the aging process.

The proportion of elderly people in the Canadian population is increasing. This can be attributed to higher life expectancy and lower birthrates in the latter half of the twentieth century.

In Prince Edward Island, the proportion of elderly in the population is already higher than in most other Provinces. With 12.4% of our population at or beyond age 65 in 1983, this Province had already surpassed projections for Canada by the year 2001. This is significant economically as well as socially, since Federal transfer payments, which comprise a high proportion of our revenue and which are calculated with consideration to population, do not take into account the age structure of the population even though age is a factor affecting the use of some of the services funded through such transfers.

In Prince Edward Island, we acknowledge the importance of careful planning to meet the needs of the elderly. During the past 15 years, there has been a focus on the systematic planning and development of excellent policies and standards for both institutional, and community based services to the elderly. As well, the senior citizens' housing program has responded well to

hundreds of people no longer able to maintain an independent residence. Still, the future will bring an even greater need to accommodate the desire of seniors to stay in their own homes, to remain active in community life, or perhaps to continue their employment. We will be required to address the need for support services to those people who are neither fully dependent nor fully independent. We will be required to distinguish between and address creatively the differing needs of the "old old" and the "young old". We will be required to rethink our position on mandatory retirement, and to examine our policies on recreation and culture in light of the elderly as participants. We would be wise to marshall the capabilities of today's seniors and to take future direction with the benefit of their input.

One important issue related to population aging is the anticipation of increased demand on the health care system. It is recognized that many health problems have been associated with old age, and that the elderly are among the heaviest consumers of health and hospital services. It could be assumed then, that expenditures required to maintain adequate health care systems are likely to increase as a result of the growing number of elderly people. We believe, however, that cost increases can be minimized -

1) By practicing successful preventive measures which could dramatically alter harmful "life-style" behaviours, reducing the risk of acute illness or forestalling the onset of chronic illness and disability;

2) By applying medical research and technological advances which could change the nature and cost of treatment; and

3) By making basic structural changes in the health care delivery system.

Nationally, health and income security are the areas of greatest need for the elderly. Even though primary responsibility for the determination of social policy on aging falls to Provincial Governments, Provincial policy is very much under the influence of the Federal Government, due to the substantial level of Federal funding in social program areas such as welfare, hospital insurance, medicare, and housing, and due to the Federal role in the provision of income to senior citizens via programs like Old Age Security, Guaranteed Income Supplement, and the Canada Pension Plan, or via more specifically targetted programs such as those available from the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

Clearly, the issues related to aging and the aged comprise a policy area which crosses jurisdictional lines both inter- and intra-governmentally, and one in which the importance of co-ordination, co-operation, and planning cannot be over emphasized.

2.2.3. Unemployment

Unemployment is one of the most powerful destructive forces of our time. Although unemployment is normally considered to be primarily an economic problem, there is considerable evidence

linking the high levels of unemployment of the 1970's and 80's to dramatically increased social problems such as stress-related illness, drug and alcohol abuse, marital breakdown, domestic violence, suicide, and crime. These are the social costs of economic hardship. Given the strength of the traditional work ethic and the central role of work in our society, it is no surprise that the personal and social effects of a lack or loss of work are so devastating to the men and women of Prince Edward Island.

The task of reducing unemployment and repairing the damage it has brought, is the highest immediate priority of all governments in Canada.

In Prince Edward Island, this task is particularly challenging. We must contend not only with externally determined economic factors such as high interest rates and inflation, but also with the difficulties inherent in the unique structure of our local economy -- a shift away from employment in agriculture, the seasonal nature of agriculture, fishing, and tourism, and a limited, but growing, manufacturing/processing sector. These factors in combination with the coming of age of the baby boom generation in times of international economic recession have led to a situation wherein there are many people in need of work than there are jobs to employ them.

Reconciliation of the readiness and desire to work, with the realities of the job market, is particularly difficult for young people with little experience, and for mature workers approaching retirement.

It is critical that a meaningful role be provided for those disillusioned young people who are learning that the kind of future they have planned and prepared for many not exist for them. For many, self-confidence and a sense of purpose have been denied or destroyed, along with the hope of establishing independence as adults. They are victims of the market economy's inability to sustain paid employment for all who want it.

We must also consider the needs of those who have been active in the work force for many years, many of whom are women, and who may be pressured into early retirement as a management cost-cutting measure, or who may become unemployed as a result of business failure or skill obsolesence. For these people, there are few options in Prince Edward Island. They must compete with the younger or more recently educated unemployed for scarce jobs; and retraining, even if they are eligible, may be viewed as too difficult, or impractical at their age. Loss of a steady income at middle age, or near retirement age is, for them, a frightening prospect.

As with all complex issues, there are no easy remedies. Governments at all levels have applied substantial resources in various ways to reverse the damages of lost employment, but most efforts fall far short of solving the problem.

It will take some time to counteract the negative results of the recession, and it will be a major challenge to do so with a view to reducing dependency on government and strengthening this Province's ability to withstand external pressures.

Social policy is an important factor in meeting this challenge. Through education and training people can be better prepared for the possibility of a number of career changes during their working lives. Individual confidence, resilience, and ingenuity must be encouraged. They are the cornerstone of success in independent employment. Closer linkages between economic and social policy and programs will be necessary. Government will continue to provide the "safety net" social programs to assist those in needs, and will continue to adjust those programs in response to changing needs, but where need is related to unemployment, it is our goal to ensure that social support services are not, and do not become, accepted as alternatives to work.

2.2.4. Health Care

Most government statements about health care, focus on the issue of cost. The health/hospital sector is one of Canada's largest industries and is certainly the largest publicly funded industry. It is the third largest employer nationally, and is second only to manufacturing in its contribution to G.N.P. However, the health care system does not behave like an industry. Like all other publicly provided human services, the "bottom line" is not a financial measure, but a measure of quality of service. Unlike in industry, where technological advance tends to lead to efficiency and reduced costs of production, advances in the technology of health care, as well as improved facilities, more highly trained professionals, and more sophisticated consumers, all tend to increase costs along with quantity and quality of health care.

The concern of government for the cost of health care does not reflect a lack of concern for the quality of health care, but rather the belief that a measure of quality is very difficult to establish objectively, and is therefore best left to the providers of the service -- the doctors and other health care professionals. In fact, the main policy instruments currently available to government for accomplishing change in the health care system are fiscal measures such as fee levels and budget controls on numbers of hospital beds.

The close relationship between the healthfulness of life and the quality of life is undeniable, and so well recognized that the law of "diminishing returns" is rarely applied in the provision of health services. Virtually every increase in the quantity of health care is considered to be a necessary, if not proportionate, improvement in the quality of health care. As a result, when the availability of public funds is limited, both government and the medical professionals have to make the very difficult choice of priorities within an area where almost all services are priorities.

The health care system in Prince Edward Island has improved during the last decade. We have been fortunate to have had the resources to upgrade facilities and expand the range of services offered. Technological advances, in combination with the dedication and energy of health care professionals, have led to increasingly sophisticated methods of diagnosis treatment and cure. From a quality of care perspective these improvements are salutary, but from a cost of care perspective there are trends which must cause concern for government. This concern is not unique to Prince Edward

Island Factors such as increasingly rapid technological change and the heightened expectations of the population have affected the entire Canadian health system, and all Provinces have been forced to reassess the delivery and management of health care services. Although cost is a common concern, the kinds of issues vary from Province to Province. For Prince Edward Island the ultimate goal is the maintenance of a universally available health care service, basically free of charge to patients, at a level of quality which is comparable to that provided elsewhere in Canada. This goal reflects the Government's belief that Prince Edward Islanders are entitled to health care services comparable to those provided to other Canadians. The responsibility for funding health services is shared between the Province and the Federal Government, and improvements to the service require not only effective management, but also recognition on the part of the Federal Government that the capability of Prince Edward Island to fund the system is below that of many other Provinces.

Direct health care costs consume some 7% to 8% of the wealth produced annually in Canada. In Prince Edward Island that proportion is nearly double (13%) in spite of the fact that the cost of operating Prince Edward Island hospitals is only 80% of the Canadian average. What this means is that, in order to provide a level of service in the Provincial health care system that would be equivalent to the Canadian average, without increased assistance from the Federal Government, Prince Edward Island would have to commit a disproportionate level of Provincial funding to the system.

When there is limited flexibility to increase public revenues to meet the increases in service costs, government may be faced with the unpalatable alternatives of cutting the level of service in health care to reduce costs, or cutting other government services and transferring more resources into the health care system.

In the past few years, the medico-institutional parts of the health care system have been demanding a larger proportion of available funds. Since 1980/81 the medical and hospital commission's portion of the total health care budget has increased while funding for preventive health care programs in areas such as mental health care, public health nursing, and dental care has had to be reduced. This is not surprising; faced with the choice of curing someone who is ill and preventing someone from becoming ill, the most urgent priority is quite clear.

However, because of the increasingly dominant role which personal choice has come to play in health, increased funding for the medico-institutional part of the Province's health care system at the expense of the parts of the system are more oriented toward illness prevention and health promotion is of great concern, not only to government, but also to health care professionals. It has been well established that the most effective way of improving the health of the population is through life-style improvements; these are most affected by research and programming in the areas of illness prevention and health promotion. This knowledge, combined with the knowledge that we could be buying both more health care and

more health at current levels of funding, provides all of the actors within the health care system with an incentive to assess the existing methods of delivering and managing services and allocating resources.

It is a challenge for government to work with the medical community to attempt to forge a consensus among actors in the health care system regarding how the system can continue to provide high quality curative health services while also expanding in the crucially important area of health promotion and illness prevention. In addition, the system will be required to adjust to demographic, economic and social changes which will affect the health care needs of the population.

Another challenge for government in assessing the health care system devolves from the knowledge that direct health care is but one factor in the production of good health, along with environment, lifestyle and biological factors. Future improvements in the health of the population will require the co-ordination of health policy with other government policies such as agriculture and environment.

Government health policy must go beyond financial control. Good management and thorough planning are essential to getting the health-care system into sound shape for the long term. Of course the Provincial Government cannot do the job alone, because government, health providers and patients interact to determine the cost and quality of care. The threat of a lack of resources to provide high quality and balanced health care is a shared one.

Therefore, the challenge, as well as the responsibility, to plan for and provide the needed services must also be shared.

2.2.5. The Justice System

There is a trend toward a demand for increased protection of society and the rights of its members. This will require reinterpretation and re-assessment of Federal and Provincial legislation in terms of both application and the respective role of each jurisdiction.

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms will have an impact on existing and future Federal and Provincial laws in a manner and to an extent that even its architects and those most closely associated with its operation cannot predict. Raising issues running from freedom of expression to the constitutionality of mandatory retirement, the Charter's application will go far beyond the legal system into virtually all facets of social interaction.

In addition, there are a number of other issues related to the justice system which will affect social policy in the future.

The Federal Government has taken the first steps toward changes to the Criminal Code of Canada. Offences related to impaired driving and offenses against the property of others continue to be a problem. The Provincial Government has a responsibility to continue to monitor the system of justice, and where appropriate, make recommendations for change to the Federal Government.

The early effects of the recently passed Young Offenders Act are already being felt. It is difficult to predict the full impact of this legislation on the criminal justice system, which has been significantly altered by the Act's inclusion of persons 16 to 18 years of age.

With the growing awareness of the incidence of spousal assault and child abuse, Government is required to find ways to intervene to protect the victims and restrain the offenders.

Government must continually assess Provincial Statutes to ensure consistency among related laws, and relevance to social trends and developments.

2.2.6. The School and The Community

Historically, the local school in Prince Edward Island represented "the education system". Built and maintained by the community, governed by community representatives, the school became a symbol of shared ideals and common interests. Its importance to community life went far beyond its responsibility for providing an education.

In twenty years, there have been major improvements in our school system. Its administration has been streamlined, facilities are modern and well-equipped, a wide range of program choices are available, retention rates approximate those of other Provinces, and

standards and salaries have been raised significantly. The focus of these changes has been on upgrading the academic dimension of the education system.

The primary purpose of education is to prepare young people to participate in the economic and social life of their community. This requires careful monitoring and adjustment of the system to meet the changing realities of the environment. School consolidation was one approach to keeping step with economic and social change. The introduction of programs related to information technology, or French immersion, and programs and services structured to protect against stereotyping and bias are additional examples of attempts to ensure that graduates of our school system can hold their own as adults in society.

The foundation for optimizing participation in the economic and social life of the community is a positive sense of self-worth. The school system must not neglect the importance of reinforcing and supporting students as they develop the values on which they will base their judgments and decisions as they mature. These values are most likely to develop within the context of the family and the community.

It is important to ensure that the developmental process in education does not result in the distancing of the community from one of its focal points. Adjustment on the part of both the school and the community is proving that it is possible to marry the best of the old and the new.

2.2.7. Equality of Opportunity In The Labour Force

The efforts of women to become self-reliant have led to the forging of new roles in society and have had a tremendous effect on social policy development since the turn of the century. Some achievements, such as the right of women to vote, or access for women to post-secondary education, are taken for granted today although they were initially considered outrageous expectations.

A number of current unresolved issues such as those related to employment equality for women, or adequacy of pension benefits, or availability of quality child care, can be expected to occupy prominent places in social policy development of the future.

Instruments such as the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and closer to home, the provincial Human Rights Act have helped to identify those elements of past social policy which limited opportunities for development of the full potential of all individuals in our society. And yet, we are still some distance from equality in practice, particularly with respect to the role of women in the work force.

Certainly one of the most significant demographic developments since the second World War has been the increased participation of women in the labour force. No doubt this is related to the tremendous growth of the service sector creating new employment

opportunities over the past thirty years, as well as to financial pressures, movement from farms, changes in family structure, and an increased cost of living forcing women to earn income.

A very high percentage of working women are employed in the same "traditionally female" occupations (clerical, sales, services, health-related) as they were 10 years ago. These occupations are characterized by relatively low wages, and limited opportunity for advancement. Technological development is altering the nature of work in these occupations and demand for these jobs is slowing, as automation reduces or modifies labour requirements. Because women's wages are generally low, their contributions to, and benefits from, pensions are low. Those working part-time, or working full-time as homemakers may not participate at all in pension planning, and may well have to rely solely on the limited provisions of the basic federal income security programs in their old age.

One approach to addressing these problems is through education and training. There are still significant attitudinal barriers to change, and women as well as men must develop a more realistic outlook to the future. Steps must be taken to ensure that students are neither advised nor easily permitted to steer away from studying subjects which are prerequisite for further training, on the basis of a false perception of their ability or blind adherence to traditional patterns of subject selection.

Avoidance of subjects like mathematics and sciences by females has been a pattern for so long, that many more adult women than men lack the prerequisite education required for today's automated work

world and tomorrow's technology. Re-orientation and different types and levels of vocational/technical training will have to be made available to those who now lack basic skills and occupational mobility. Such training should be seen as a sound economic investment if we aim to match the skills of our labour force to the employment requirements of the future, and a sound social investment if we believe in helping individuals achieve greater self-sufficiency.

More women are working outside the home for much of their adult lives. Women, as well as men, in their capacities as students, teachers, parents, and employers, must accept this fact, and as evidence of acceptance, must work together toward equality of opportunity.

2.2.8. Children and Families

Our society holds in high regard the concept of the family as a protective, supportive, and developmental social unit. The usual vision of family includes children -- to receive and thrive under their parents' love and guidance. And yet we see increasing evidence that in too many families, positive demonstrations of love and guidance fall victim to interpersonal conflict or financial pressure, and family members' ability to interact constructively is hampered.

When this happens, everyone suffers. But children, as the most vulnerable members of the family, are the most seriously affected. Not only are they at risk of being subjected to violence, or of having their most basic needs ignored; they are also at risk of developing inadequate and misguided perceptions of human relationship, which may determine their later ability to function as adults in society.

Government's philosophy toward meeting the needs of children is based upon a recognition of children both as members of families, and as individuals.

Government philosophy holds that the primary responsibility for meeting childrens' needs, protecting their rights, and ensuring their safety, rests with their parents. This philosophy respects the right of parents to determine the family's values, to make decisions about the family, and to solve the family's problems. Nevertheless, government believes that society has a responsibility to ensure that parents, in exercising their own rights, do not endanger the safety and well-being of their children.

These beliefs are reflected in the 1981 Family and Child Services Act, which introduced the provision for mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse or neglect. Mandatory reporting has brought to light many instances of family difficulty which might otherwise have remained hidden. Assistance has been extended to families in trouble, with particular attention to the effect on children of family stress, and the importance of identifying and building on strengths which may exist.

This focus on strengthening and maintaining the family unit is a relatively recent approach to social welfare, replacing previous practices of institutionalizing neglected or abused children, or relocating them to foster or adoptive homes. (While this latter measure is still taken on occasion, it is more often used for temporary respite, or as a last resort after intensive interventions have proven fruitless.)

Although today's family-oriented outlook is a positive step forward, we should look hopefully to the day when government's direct involvement in parent and child relationships is unnecessary. While it is important to continue working toward repairing the damages of the past, preventive action now can bring all of society great rewards in the future. Changing conditions in society have influenced the structure of families. Today's families are subject to many pressures and stresses once relieved by traditional or extended family supports. If we, as a community and as government, can find ways to minimize those pressures while at the same time helping people to manage the stress in their lives, if we can better prepare people for the realities of parenthood, if we can reinforce our many excellent social agencies in their attempts at early identification and resolution of problems before they become unmanageable, then we will have made a very wise investment.

2.2.9. Volunteerism and Self-Help

The years of the great depression marked the beginning of a trend across North America toward increasing reliance on government for solutions to both social and economic problems. Governments of

the past 50 years, in attempting to combat the effects of complex pressures on society, created not only many excellent essential programs and services, but also, unfortunately, some rather unrealistic expectations about their ability to provide limitless development, prosperity, and support.

While this trend has been felt in Prince Edward Island, it has been tempered somewhat by the strength of independent spirit and community pride which have characterized this Province for 200 years. Still, the recent economic recession, following directly the temporary and artificial wealth of the Development Plan years, has helped generate increasing demand for government action.

In responding to this demand, government must be mindful of the fact that action need not necessarily mean more new programs and services. We must take care to foster the spirit of volunteerism, and to reinforce rather than replace, the very evident ability of Islanders to help themselves and their neighbours.

Islanders' willingness to share good fortune and to band together against adversity is one of the many gratifying features of life in Prince Edward Island.

Last year, the Legislative Committee on the Quality of Life reported, "the Committee was greatly impressed to learn of the number of groups working within the community to help battered wives and children, to combat pornography, to provide healthy forms of recreation, and noted the many other good works that are being done by private volunteer groups." The Committee called for greater

participation in voluntary organizations, stating that, "at a time when government's efforts must be limited, new initiatives will, of necessity, flow from the combination of the efforts of both the governmental and non-governmental sectors."

Involvement in the organized voluntary sector is a valuable and rewarding form of self-help. But self-help is not restricted to group activities. There is an equally important individual aspect to self-help which sees people living out their responsibility for themselves and their future through, for example, avoiding smoking, practicing farm and highway safety, fireproofing their homes, moderating their use of alcohol, engaging in activities to improve physical fitness, using leisure time effectively, following a nutritional diet, pursuing continuing education, and managing a greater share of their own legal and business affairs.

The benefits of individual self-help initiatives are extended when people seek out others with common problems and unite to offer mutual support, or to advocate for change.

Both individual self-help and group volunteerism fit today's economic and social climate. First, they can prevent the development of problems and they can address many existing problems more appropriately than larger institutions can. But also, they can serve as vehicles for people to take charge, to build, to exercise control over their lives. Both ways, confidence is developed - personal confidence and societal confidence. Both are essential elements in the growth and prosperity we seek.

2.2.10. The Francophone Population

The Acadians, descendants of the first European settlers in the Maritime Provinces, have given much to this Province. And the recent relocation of the Department of Veterans' Affairs' National Headquarters has brought a new group of Francophones to Prince Edward Island. They add a significant dimension to Island affairs.

Throughout this century, French speaking Acadians in Prince Edward Island have been concerned that they are being assimilated into the English speaking majority. There has been, however, a strong and growing movement to prevent this from happening; the trend toward preserving and promoting pride in French heritage and more widespread use of the French language, is national in scope and has been facilitated by the passage of the Official Languages Act of 1969 and the entrenchment of language rights in the Canadian Constitution.

Interest in the acquisition or retention of French language skills is high in this Province; in 1984-85, 2,238 students were enrolled in French Immersion programs spanning grades 1 to 12; an additional 511 were enrolled in French minority language education; each year an increasing number of adults are studying French in a variety of post-secondary and extension courses. These figures include members of Acadian families who are re-acquiring the use of their native language.

Recently the right to education in either official language has become an issue in a number of Provinces. Like many other issues arising from the Charter of Rights, adjustment of language and education programs will require inter-Governmental co-operation and legislative co-ordination. Some of the most significant effects of the interpretation and application of the Charter will be felt in the education system, for which the Province is responsible. Therefore, the role of the Federal Government in promoting the principles of cultural and linguistic duality and equality, is one which must be defined openly and flexibly, and with Provincial participation.

In this Province's recent history, governments and the French speaking community have enjoyed an effective rapport. In order to maintain a climate of goodwill and mutual respect, it is essential to bear in mind that the objectives of recognizing two official languages and cultures in Canada include the achievement of greater harmony and unity. It will be a challenge for all to ensure that the demands of, and responses to francophone minorities do not lead instead to further alienation, and segregation.

2.2.11 Native Peoples

Native culture is an integral part of the Canadian identity. Native peoples hold a special place in the cultural mosaic of Prince Edward Island. They are entitled to fully participate in the cultural, social, and economic life of the Island community. Nevertheless, because of a variety of economic and social circumstances, the native peoples of Prince Edward Island have, for

many years, faced special economic and social disadvantages. They have suffered higher rates of unemployment, lower incomes, and a higher incidence of social problems than other Islanders.

During this decade, considerable attention has been focussed on the historic rights of the native peoples of Canada, the most prominent of which are self-government and equality. While formal recognition of these rights will provide the mechanism for achieving full participation, economic and social inequities must be corrected before native peoples can fully assume the position in society to which they are entitled.

2.2.12. Recreation and Leisure

One of the more notable trends in the social life of Canadians over the past fifteen years has been the increased awareness of the importance of recreational activity to improved physical, mental and emotional health.

The benefits of regular participation in recreational activities are many. They range from improved health, appearance, and stamina, to the opportunity for social interaction, to the development of self-confidence and a sense of accomplishment, to the acquisition of leadership skills. As well, recreation can play a major role in enhancing the quality of life for the mentally and physically disabled. Organized sport has been one of the first areas to have successfully demonstrated integration of the disabled into the activities of the general community.

Increasing numbers of people are becoming interested in positive lifestyle factors such as proper nutrition, exercise, and the balance between work and relaxation. As a result, there has been remarkable growth in the rate of participation in sport, fitness, cultural and artistic pursuits and other leisure time activities. This is evidence of the desire of individuals to exercise greater control over their own well-being.

3. FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Government is committed to meeting its responsibilities toward the people of Prince Edward Island in ways that are consistent with the basic philosophy and principles previously stated. This commitment will be reflected in legislation, programs, and day-to-day decisions now, and in the future.

If attempts at social improvement are to succeed, they must arise from the co-operative efforts of all levels of Government and the community. For a number of issues, one of the most important roles for the Provincial Government is that of facilitator, providing opportunities for consultation and joint planning.

The issues explored in earlier sections of this document will influence the development of social policy for a number of years to come. Some will require considerable study and consultation before appropriate responses can be determined. For others, public education may be the focus of Government action. And still other issues, will continue to be addressed, at least in the short term, through existing programs and services.

As needs change, or as new resources become available, social policy directions will be adapted. The development of social policy will be an on-going process.

This present summary of future directions in social policy is intended to provide a base from which new directions can be built in subsequent years.

3.1 The Aged and Aging

Government respects and supports the desire of senior citizens to remain in their homes and communities. As well, Government recognizes their importance to community life. Therefore, Government remains firmly committed to the process and principal of decentralization of Government services wherever possible. The availability of community and home based services to the elderly can be critical factors in the prevention of inappropriate institutionalization which removes senior citizens from their family and friends.

Government's commitment will be reflected in the strengthening and re-organization of a number of family and home support services into a co-ordinated home-based approach to health care and social support.

The Home Care Program will assist elderly individuals in functioning as independently as possible. It is consistent with the needs and wishes of families to stay together, and to participate in the provision of care to their elderly family members. It also recognizes the home as the most practical, most suitable, and most economical setting for the delivery of personal services to many individuals.

Maintaining an active role in community life is of great value to the aged, and their participation yields many benefits to other members of the community. Government will continue to promote and support initiatives such as the Intergenerational Program, which brings together the old and the young for mutual understanding and appreciation.

It is a well established fact that "lifestyle" is a crucial factor in the maintenance of good health. Government has broadened the focus of its nutrition programs to include educational information to improve the nutritional status of the elderly. And Government is involved in the promotion of freedom from smoking as a long-term general strategy.

Government has developed a new Emergency Home Repair program aimed at low-income, elderly homeowners in recognition of the importance of adequate housing to the quality of life. In the past, some seniors have been forced to move to institutional settings when their own homes needed basic repairs which they could not afford. This new program will address what has been a major deficiency in housing support.

Government recognizes that for some elderly people, institutional care is a necessity, and there is a commitment to ensuring excellence in institutional service. This goal underlies the new Community Care Facilities Standards, the construction of an additional manor in Summerside, the reconstruction of Beach Grove Home for Special Care, and the relocation of the Provincial Home for the Aged to renovated facilities. It is also reflected in the

developmental approach to care within institutions, which promotes the belief that human needs for independence, self determination, and participation in and contribution to a community, can be met within a structured environment.

3.2 Unemployment

Government is committed to working with industry and education to prepare people for the realities of the work world, and to provide opportunities for all Islanders to invest their energy and creativity in this Province. Social policy will continue to play an important role in creating employment for Islanders through support of and co-ordination with job creation and economic development activities. Through a combination of new program initiatives and adjustments to existing programs, Government will continue to work toward reversing those factors which have forced people to leave Prince Edward Island to find work, when they would have preferred to stay.

The re-introduction of a compulsory core curriculum in senior high schools will ensure that graduates have a solid academic foundation in languages, humanities, sciences, and mathematics. These will be supplemented by programs such as computer awareness, reflecting modern technological developments. In addition, Government will take steps to enhance awareness of the importance of Vocational and Technical education in preparing young people to enter the labour force.

Industry and the community as a whole benefit when opportunities are developed for young people to gain a foothold on employment in the private sector. By providing incentives for established business to hire recent graduates, and by assisting potential entrepreneurs as they develop new business proposals and funding sources, Government will be fostering an attitude of entrepreneurship, encouraging on-the-job skill development, and strengthening Island industry.

Counselling and employment preparation programs have proven successful and will be continued for those who require social support because they are at present unemployed, but are capable of productive employment.

3.3 Health Care

To improve and strengthen the health care system on Prince Edward Island, Government will continue to focus on balancing home-based care and programs geared toward deinstitutionalization wherever possible, with improvements to the existing institutional structure.

New resources will strengthen a number of existing family and home support services, while improvements are made to existing institutions such as Hillsborough Hospital. In addition, a new hospital in Souris will provide much improved services to the Eastern Kings Region.

It is the responsibility of the Health Care system and of individuals to recognize the crucial importance of life-style and safety to all aspects of healthy living. The Government will continue to promote good health and safety with programs ranging from alcohol and drug education, to maternal and child health to occupational and highway safety.

3.4 The Justice System

Two major challenges facing the justice system result from the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the new Young Offenders Act, both of which have recently become law.

Although the Government has adjusted Provincial Legislation, where necessary, to recognize a number of the provisions of the Charter of Rights, the specific implications of many general provisions will not be clear until they have been interpreted through the Courts. As this takes place, the Government will continue to adjust relevant Provincial Legislation to ensure that the rights of individuals contained in the specific sections, as well as the spirit of the Charter of Rights, are maintained on Prince Edward Island.

In keeping with the provisions of the Young Offenders Act, the Government will provide a permanent facility for young offenders in Summerside. An interim facility will be available as soon as possible.

Through public legal education and information, Government will continue to emphasize community involvement with, and access to, the justice system.

Continued emphasis will be placed on the issues of domestic violence and victims of crime in co-operation with the Federal Ministry of the Solicitor General.

3.5 The School and the Community

Government is committed to working with parents and co-operating with School Boards, teachers and students, provide the best possible educational opportunities for Prince Edward Island children. Since education is primarily the responsibility of parents, both government and School Boards must remain open and receptive to parental concerns in establishing education policy and in the delivery of programs. Government has already taken steps to ensure that consultation takes place among the major partners in education through the establishment of the Review Committee to study recommendations contained in the Paquette Report and through implementation of a number of recommendations contained in the Report of the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Curriculum.

Although the education system is basically sound, there are a number of issues to be addressed and new initiatives to be taken by Government.

Greater emphasis will be placed on having the education system respond to children with special needs. Government has in recent

years added more teachers to the system to teach children with learning disabilities and the mentally handicapped. This effort must be increased; however, great care must be taken to ensure that proper diagnostic and prescriptive methods are in place. Government is committed to a "team approach" involving parents, Health and Social Services personnel, and school officials, in order that children are properly placed and their real needs addressed.

Government believes that basic core subjects such as English/French, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies must form part of a student's education. These subject areas will be emphasized as part of the curriculum, so that students will obtain the tools of learning, as well as a knowledge and appreciation of their heritage and culture.

Due to advances in technology, it is important that Prince Edward Island students obtain an education which enables them to compete in the modern work place. Government has recognized this need through the establishment of a computer awareness program at the junior high school level which will be made available to all junior high school students within the next three years. In addition, the senior high school computer literacy course will be updated and improved.

Government will continue to encourage stronger ties between the school and the community. Community education programs will be strengthened and emphasized, the feasibility of adult community

members participating in education programs will be explored, and consultation with the community and all aspects of the education system will continue.

3.6 Equality of Opportunity in the Labour Force

A first step toward equality in the work force is to increase awareness of those attitudes and assumptions which limit individuals' opportunities. Workshops and public conferences will be held to acquaint participants with unconscious stereotyping patterns.

Insofar as possible, Government will ensure that education and training systems are free of bias and discrimination.

Members of the Legislative Assembly and senior civil servants will be exposed to the concepts of employment equity so that they will be better able to understand the implications of discrimination in the workplace.

A Human Resource Equity Directorate will be established within government to facilitate implementation of policy pertaining to equality in the work force.

These measures will serve as a beginning to address the issues raised during the United Nations Decade of Women, not as women's issues but as issues affecting the future of society.

3.7 Children and Families

Last year, the report of the Committee on Quality of Life was received by the Legislature. It is stated in the Quality of Life report that, "All groups appearing before the Committee agreed that action must be taken to arrest current trends and to restore the family to its rightful place within our society. Much of what is distinctive in the Island way of life rests upon the strength of the traditional family." It is evident from the many presentations made to the Quality of Life Committee that Islanders are gravely concerned for the future of the family unit. Members of Government share that concern.

One of the most severe strains on family relationships can be the serious illness or disability of a family member. Government's interest in prevention of disability is reflected in the decision to enforce seatbelt use for children under 12, and in the highway safety messages aimed at encouraging voluntary seatbelt use by adults. Government has developed, and continues to refine an excellent network of preventive services including pre- and post-natal education, nutrition, immunization, and universal child health and development appraisals. These are helping to minimize the incidence of preventable illness, and to identify and treat other disabilities and disorders as early as possible.

Government believes that child welfare and family support are the shared responsibilities of all levels of Government, social institutions, and individuals. For its part, the Provincial Government through services in areas such as mental health, child

protection, addictions treatment, and probation will continue to focus on helping family members to recognize and build on their strengths, as individuals and as interdependent members of a group.

Government is committed to ensuring that those who work with families in difficulty are qualified to intervene and assist. Therefore, increased attention will be given to strategic recruitment and training.

The increased availability of information on the incidence and consequences of destructive activities such as child abuse, and other forms of domestic violence has heightened public awareness of these issues, which are clearly unacceptable in any society. Government will be increasing its work with communities and volunteers toward prevention of family breakdown and promotion of healthy family development. New approaches will be applied to dealing with adolescents and young unmarried mothers in need of care and protection. Public awareness and education have proven to be necessary and powerful agents of change.Information on factors contributing to healthy child and family development will be made available through many channels, including schools, child care facilities, public health programs, social services, and a wide variety of community agencies. A major public conference jointly sponsored by Government, and community agencies such as Women's Institutes, and Home and School Associations, is planned as one step in increasing adults' awareness of the impact of their words, actions, and attitudes on children.

Government will continue to encourage and work with community education resources such as the R.C.M.P. and the Inter-agency Committee on Domestic Violence. Government remains ready and willing to work with concerned Islanders toward a society of strong families.

3.8 Volunteerism and Self-Help

Government supports volunteerism and self-help fully, in concept and in practice, and looks forward to a continued productive partnership with volunteers.

Much has been accomplished by the voluntary sector in Prince Edward Island, and Government commends the work of every person who gives freely of time and talent to make this Province a better place. From volunteens in nursing homes to community school teachers, from Service Board members to minor sports coaches, from telephone counsellors to fundraisers - thousands help thousands daily, and a tremendous number of valuable services are provided.

Government will complement volunteer efforts wherever possible. Each new request for Government delivery of social programs will be assessed for its potential relationship to the voluntary sector, for the voluntary sector has not yet been fully tapped as a resource in the human services system.

The value of "self-help" networks has been demonstrated. Where appropriate, Government will facilitate the initial stages of such

groups by bringing together people who share common problems or needs, so that they might share also in helping others and themselves to work toward a better future.

An increased emphasis will be built into community and home based government programs to encourage people, such as the retired fisherman or teacher, the veteran, or the farm wife, to become more involved in community life, so that their valuable experience and wisdom can be shared with others.

Government will assist voluntary organizations through the provision of such supports as planning and technical assistance, information and co-ordination, use of facilities, and administrative assistance. Government will begin a program of management training to better equip volunteers to carry out the responsibilities they assume.

3.9 The Francophone Population

French language education is a critical element in the preservation of our Acadian heritage and in the promotion of bilingualism and biculturalism in Prince Edward Island.

The Provincial and Federal Governments have developed an effective relationship with respect to language programs, and Prince Edward Island benefits from Federal funding and cost-sharing in this area. With the assistance of the Secretary of State, we have been able to provide French language program development and coordination

in the Regional School Units, and to establish a French Language School in Charlottetown. The Provincial Government is committed to ensuring the continued operation of this school.

To minimize problems related to legislative interpretation, Government recently amended the definition of "mother tongue" in the Provincial School Act, to correspond with the Canadian Charter of Rights.

In recognition of the needs of Acadians, Government has established and will continue to maintain a bilingual Government Services Centre in the West Prince Region.

Government will continue to support cultural activities such as the Acadian festival and the development and promotion of traditional Acadian handcrafts. These activities are important not only for the expression of Acadian heritage and culture, but also for the achievement of cross-cultural understanding and appreciation.

Government will continue to seek the advice and participation of groups such as the Comité Acadien, to ensure that the needs of our Francophone population are considered in the formulation of Government policies and programs.

3.10. Native Peoples

The Government of Prince Edward Island has been closely involved within the Constitutional forum, in the discussion of issues concerning the native peoples of Canada. As this process continues, government will continue to consult with the Native Council of Prince Edward Island in order to ensure that the views of these Islanders are reflected in Federal-Provincial discussions.

Government will re-affirm its support for the principle of native self-government. Although the concept of native self-government is critical, the reality of self-government for native peoples in Prince Edward Island will require the maximum possible control, input, and administrative responsibility by native peoples for programs affecting them. Government is committed to this.

The reality of self-government will also require the achievement of economic and social equality, and the government of Prince Edward Island is committed to working with native peoples and other levels of government to make gains in these areas.

3.11 Recreation and Leisure

The Government views recreation in the broadest sense, as physical, social and cultural advancement, and as an important aspect of education and of healthful living. Across Prince Edward Island we enjoy a wide range of recreational facilities and programs, from libraries to hiking trails, from community theatres to sport arenas, from museums to handcraft schools. Recreation can serve as a valuable means of encouraging families to share time together and of strengthening community spirit. Therefore, government will promote recreational activities of all types as an essential component of life, from early childhood to old age.

Economic and social factors have created conditions where most individuals in today's society will have increased in leisure time. Therefore, it will become increasingly important for individuals to have opportunities to use leisure time, not only for rest from work, but as a means of achieving personal potential in a variety of fields through participation with others. The creation of these opportunities requires involvement and support from the education system, industry, the family, volunteers and all levels of Government.

Programs of community activities are essential elements of life if people are to keep their sense of purpose and well being. To assist Prince Edward Island communities to further develop a wide range of recreational opportunities, the Government will encourage greater coordination of recreational activities at the community level.

Through the existing Community Recreation Commissions/ Committees, and the professional leadership and program grants to these organizations, the local agencies which contribute to communities' recreation programs, such as the schools, the churches, the libraries, the museums, social clubs and interest groups, will be further encouraged to broaden their programs and to increase the number of participants in those programs.

4. CONCLUSION

The development of the Government's social policy has been and will continue to be an ongoing process, reflecting the needs and wishes of the people and communities of Prince Edward Island.

The range and complexity of social programs illustrates clearly that to suggest complete solutions to problems or final answers to all questions, at any point in time, is neither possible nor responsible. Therefore, this policy statement does not constitute an end to discussion or exploration of the many important social issues facing the Government and people of this Province.

This policy statement illustrates a fundamental philosophical approach to governing and a commitment to address social issues in a way that reflects that basic philosophical approach. Through time, new issues and challenges, and many that are not addressed in this statement, will require attention, but the Government believes that the fundamental approach is sound. This approach is based upon consultation with communities, concerned individuals, representative organizations and other levels of Government, all partners in the development and implementation of social policy.

Government's approach to social policy is also based upon the firm belief that policy should not address only social problems, but also social opportunities. Prince Edward Island is a good Province

in which to live, a good Province in which to raise a family, and a good Province in which to belong to a community. It is Government's intention in all areas of policy to recognize and build upon the strengths of our community.